

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

J&J Services Inc.

South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership

J&J Services Brings New Product to Market with Assistance from SCMEP and Eureka! Winning Ways

Client Profile:

J & J Services, Inc. provides production and job shop fabrication, along with racking systems fabrication and maintenance as well as production assembly and part sort/rework services. The woman-owned business employs 12 people at its facility in Piedmont, South Carolina.

Situation:

As a supplier to BMW, J&J's manufacturing service division almost collapsed when the automotive industry eliminated contractors. To reduce expenses, J&J had to cut two-thirds of its staff. "We were really hit hard," said Larry Wenner, J&J Services General Manager. "We had serviced the automotive industry in the upstate forever." Looking for guidance and support, J&J appealed to the South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, and used a program called Eureka! Winning Ways (E!WW), enabling J&J to shift its product development process.

Solution:

SCMEP conducted a one-day workshop which generated more than 50 concepts for new products. Those ideas were narrowed to two before being sifted through the E!WW Merwyn research process, which boasts an 88 percent reliability rating for predicting an idea's success. The fire rescreen emerged as the clear-cut choice, which resulted in the creation of a new type of fire rescreen -- a better, more durable, safer, customized fit rescreen. J&J's fire screens have been designed for functionality, safety, sturdiness and style. Each heirloom quality screen is laser cut and crafted an 11-gauge carbon steel, then powder-coated with high temperature paint. A surrounding frame supports the screen mesh, which is cut into motifs -- hikers, floral, waterfowl outdoorsman or modern -- separating J&J fire screens from similar products. The fire screens can also be tailored to the individual, allowing for any preference -- family crest, alma mater, business logo, hobby or personal artwork. The fire screens weigh nearly 40 pounds each, offering protection from flying embers flames and rolling logs. SCMEP also teamed J&J with one of its resource communications and branding of the fire screen, and also collateral, web site with virtual presentation, pricing suggestions, promotion and helping to establish a distribution channel. SCMEP's strategy, from Eureka! to Merwyn to market, has helped grant J&J the freedom to grow and to redefine its company.

Results:

* Anticipated \$20 million in revenue.

Testimonial:

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"It's a great tool in that we're a small business and we can brainstorm very easily but we didn't have the methodology. That's the secret to Eureka!. They train in the methodology of brainstorming. Coupled with the Merwyn system, we were able to move forward with conviction. It's an exercise worth taking. For the amount of time you invest and what you walk away with, there's great value there."

Larry Wenner, President